

Amendments to the Claims:

This LISTING OF CLAIMS will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) In an on-line financial screening service, a method of searching a financial database stored in a computer memory, including data for a plurality of companies, and an intellectual property database stored in a computer memory, including data for a plurality of companies, in order to find securities matching user search criteria and relevant intellectual property, wherein the users access the ~~database~~ databases over the Internet, the method comprising:

constructing, on an interface associated with the computer, a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria defined by a user;

searching the database for records matching the financial search criteria and the intellectual property search criteria ~~defined by a user~~; and

relaxing at least some of the search criteria, until at least a required number of matching records are found, wherein the required number of matching records is never less than one; and

reporting the matching records to the user via the interface, including at least one item of data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the search criteria is suitable for being delimited between a minimum and maximum.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) In an on-line service, a method operating on a computer for screening financial investment opportunities, comprising the steps of:
constructing, on a query interface associated with the computer, a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria;
searching a financial database, including data for a plurality of companies stored in computer memory, for data records associated with at least one company based upon a the financial search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;
searching an intellectual property database, including data for a plurality of companies stored in computer memory, for data records associated with the at least one company based upon an the intellectual property search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;
combining, using the computer, the results of the financial database searching step and the intellectual property database searching step to determine common results on a company basis;
using the computer, analyzing the number of common results on a company basis to determine if the number is greater than zero, and if not
relaxing the search criteria employed in at least one of the searching steps and rerunning the searches ~~so as~~ to obtain a non-zero number of common results;
and
depicting the combined results via an interface of the computer.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 8, wherein the step of relaxing the search criteria is accomplished without user intervention.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 4 8, further including the step of maintaining the financial database data records and the intellectual property database records, wherein the step includes periodically launching an automated search of network resources to locate and update financial and intellectual property information; and
storing the updated information in the respective database.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the updated information includes:
at least one item of financial data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio, and
at least one item of intellectual property data selected from the group consisting of Patent Number, Inventor Name, Issue Date, Title, Inventor State, Abstract, Inventor Country, Claim(s), Attorney or Agent, Description/Specification, Assignee Name, Assignee State, Assignee Country, Issued US Classification, International Classification, Application Serial Number, Application Date, Primary Examiner, Assistant Examiner, Parent Case Information, Related US App. Data, US References, Reissue Data Foreign References, Foreign Priority, PCT Information, Government Interest, and Application Type.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 4,~~ In an on-line service, a method for screening financial investment opportunities, comprising the steps of:

~~further including the step of constructing a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria;~~

searching a financial database, including data for a plurality of companies, for data records associated with at least one company based upon the financial search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;

searching an intellectual property database, including data for a plurality of companies, for data records associated with the at least one company based upon the intellectual property search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;

combining the results of the financial database searching step and the intellectual property database searching step to determine common results on a company basis;

analyzing the number of common results on a company basis to determine if the number is greater than zero, and if not

relaxing the search criteria employed in at least one of the searching steps and rerunning the searches to obtain a non-zero number of common results; and depicting the combined results.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of constructing a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria is facilitated by the step of displaying a search construction interface to a user.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein said computer platform includes a client and a server interconnected by a network, and where the financial database and the intellectual property database are stored on devices accessible through said server.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for screening financial investment opportunities, comprising:

a computer platform responsive to user input including access to at least a financial database including data records associated with a plurality of companies and an intellectual property database including data records associated with a plurality of companies [,];

a query interface, associated with said computer platform, said user interface constructing a search query including both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria;

programmable search software, operable by said computer platform, for searching the financial database for data records associated with at least one company based upon a the financial search criteria and retrieving the results thereof for storage in a first memory, said programmable search function also being

employed for searching the intellectual property database for data records associated with the at least one company based upon ~~an~~ the intellectual property search criteria and retrieving the results thereof for storage in a second memory;

~~further including means for~~ the computer platform automatically relaxing search criteria employed by the programmable search software ~~so as~~ to obtain a non-zero number of search results;

search analysis software, operable by said computer platform, for combining the results of the financial database search and the intellectual property database search to determine common results; and

a display device for depicting the common results.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein said financial database includes records having at least one item of financial data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio, and

where said intellectual property database includes records having at least one item of intellectual property data selected from the group consisting of Patent Number, Inventor Name, Issue Date, Title, Inventor State, Abstract, Inventor Country, Claim(s), Attorney or Agent, Description/Specification, Assignee Name, Assignee State, Assignee Country, Issued US Classification, International Classification, Application Serial Number, Application Date, Primary Examiner, Assistant Examiner, Parent Case Information, Related US App. Data, US References, Reissue Data Foreign References, Foreign Priority, PCT Information, Government Interest, and Application Type.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein said display device is suitable for the display of at least one user-selectable data item to assist

with the construction of a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)